FRA CIPOLLA.

A

TALE.

Boccaccio (G)

k

In *BOCCACE.*

Tranſlated from the Original Manuſcript, with Notes Hiſtorical, Critical and Moral.

Jamque Opus inveni.

LONDON:

Printed for T. READ, in *Dogwell-Court, White-Fryers.* MDCCXXXV

LONDON:

BRITISH MUSEUM

[redacted]

TO THE

Curious READER.

IF *the Title Page ſurprize you, how will you be ſtruck by the Appearance of an Edition of* Boccace *from this very Manuſcript, and to be ſure you are impatient to know how I came by it, but the Story would be too long here, and will be more properly the Subject of the Preface to the Edition itſelf, and for preſent Speculation a Hint may be ſufficient, that this Treaſure was found in the Ruins of a Villa of Queen* Joan's, *near* Capoua. *Alas! what will become of all the Editions now in vogue when mine appears?* Tonſon, *in all his Pride, will be turn'd out of the moſt elegant Libraries to illuſtrate the Rails of* Moorfields, *and the* Giunti *themſelves, the admir'd* 1527, (*or the* Venti Sette, *as it is called*) *for which ſome Gentlemen, of my Acquaintance, have paid Twenty Piſtoles, will then hardly be worth Twenty Pence: I own I am ſorry for all this, but the Publick muſt be preferr'd to all private Conſiderations whatever.*

4 7

I am

To the Curious READER.

I am now to addreſs myſelf to the Criticks, beſeeching them, as I mean no more than to preſent em with a Specimen of my Manuſcript, to ſhew the Imperfectneſs of all the Editions now in being, not to damn the Tranſlator, but rather encourage the Editor, this being a Work of great Labour and Expence, and may contribute as much to the Publick Emolument, as a Couple of large Folio's of Travels.

FRA

FRA CIPOLLA.

BOCCACE, the Scourge of wicked Monk,
Intriguing Prieſt, and wanton Punk,
Of FRA CIPOLLA tells this Story,
Which I will try to lay before ye.
CIPOLLA hardly can be tagg'd with Rhime,
But, as I'd have my Verſe to chime,
* I ask'd the *Laureat* his Opinion,
If I may call him *Father Onion*;
And he declares, the Law allows,
(Let no one therefore knit his Brows)
In Caſes of Poetick Cramp,
A Liberty to change or ſtamp.

* *I ask'd the* Laureat *his Opinion.*] 'Tis no ſmall Satisfaction to me, to be ſupported by ſo great an Authority.

Now to obſerve Heroick Stile,
A Muſe ſhou'd be invok'd to ſmile;
* But I abhor this Heathen Rite,
Practic'd, alas! i'th' Goſpel's Spite.
St. *Anthony* ſhall me inſpire,
To ſing the Praiſes of his Friar,
For he was of that brawny Herd,
Whom Faſts and Vigils never mar'd,
And plump, tho' of the dapper Size,
With yellow Hair and leering Eyes;
Of *Latin* he had juſt a Smack,
At Preaching a moſt clever Knack;
So that his Sermons, let me tell ye,
Wou'd melt a Heart of Stone to Jelly;
And when to Char'ty he exhorted,
He ne'er with empty Hand departed.
The Abbot, not to let a Brother
In drowſy Cell his Talent ſmother,
To thoſe, who had the Saint's Protection,
Sent him full oft to make Collection;
And now unto *Certaldo* Village,
For Paſture fam'd and not for Tillage,

* *But I abhor this Heathen Rite.*] Were that moſt Chriſtian Poet Sir *R**** B***** living, I ſhou'd be ſure of an Advocate in him: The good Man, from his Soul, abominated the Heathen Mithology, as appears from his excellent Prefaces to his Works; and as he ſays very well, *What have we to do with* Apollo, *is there not the good King* David *always ready to tune our Harps for us.*

And

And that he might ſucceed the better,
Equipp'd him with a *Paſt'ral Letter.*
The *Nuncio* having got his Warrant
* Away he trots upon his Errand;
And after ſhewing his Credentials,
He thus proceeds upon Eſſentials.
I joy, Beloved, that you thrive,
You are the happi'ſt Folk alive.
Thus guarded by our holy *Tony*,
For his Elect we gladly own ye,
Your Cows with Calf, your Sows with Pig,
(And thus he runs a pretty Rig)
Great, very great, your Obligations,
So pray be large in your Oblations:
But to inforce this Duty ſtricter
This Ev'ning I deſign a Lecture,
In which, by Logick, not fallacious,
I'll prove your Off'rings efficacious,

* *Away he trots upon his Errand.*] According to the Letter our *Nuncio* footed it to *Certaldo*, but whether this be an Inadvertency of *Boccace*, or whether the digniſy'd Churchmen of that Century did really ſerve themſelves of their own Legs, I do not take upon me to determine, tho', in my humble Opinion, there is no forming a perfect Idea of the Church Militant without dividing it into Cavalry and Infantry, and if a modern Nuncio wou'd make a ridiculous Figure without an Equipage, who will blame me for ſetting CIPOLLA on Horſeback; beſides, as I ſhall endeavour to preſerve the Dignity of his Character throughout, (which, by the Bye, our Author has not done) agreeable to that Precept in *Horace*,

——— *Servetur ad imum*
Qualis ab Incæpto proceſſerit & ſibi conſtet,

I hope the Liberty I have taken will rather pleaſe than offend.

To ſave the Soul of vileſt Sinner;
But now enough——let's hie to Dinner.

By all means, here I muſt relate
A Circumſtance of moment great.
To mark his Love, the Ghoſtly Father
Promis'd to ſhew his Babes a Feather;
* Pluck'd from the great Archangel's Wing,
Who did the gracious Meſſage bring,
And made that heav'nly Salutation,
Which op'd the way to Man's Salvation.

Two arch young Rogues, who ſmelt a Rat,
(And had contriv'd it very pat)
Whilſt Fra Cipolla's eating Soup,
Unto his Inn away they troup,
Up Stairs they whip unſeen by any,
† For luckily the Friar's *Zanny*
†† Was in the Kitchen ſmugling *Nanny*.

* *Pluck'd from the great Archangel's Wing.*] I profeſs I have no greater Authority for calling *Gabriel* an Archangel, than the *Poetica Licentia*, to help out the Verſe, which otherwiſe wou'd have limp'd a little; and I flatter myſelf it is within the *Quid libet audendi*.

† *For luckily the Friar's* Zanny.] Tho' *Fante* be a Servant, and *Zanni* a Buffoon in its original Signification, I wou'd not have it thrown in my Diſh, that I make a Mountebank and a Jack Pudding of the Nuncio and his Valet. 'Tis really hard upon us Gentlemen of the jingling Faculty, we dig, we toil for a Rhime, and after all, comes an ill-natur'd Criticiſm, ſtamps a different Meaning upon't, and turns our Panegyrick into Satire. This, worſe than *Egyptian* Bondage, is very pathetically lamented by *Boileau* himſelf, in his Second Satire, *Sur la Difficultè de trouver la Rime, & de la faire accorder avec la Raiſon*; And our *Hudibras*, who play'd the Game of Crambo better than moſt of us, felt it very grievous, no doubt, when he ſays,

Let one for Senſe, and one for Rhime,
Be held ſufficient at one time.

Alack-

Alackaday! what have I done,
Well may I dread the Criticks Frown;
Zanni pro Fante an Abuſe is,
Beyond th' Extent of *Catachreſis.*
Be that as 'twill I muſt not ſtay
To obviate what they have to ſay;
The Story's long and I ſhou'd tire
My Reader to appeaſe their Ire:
† Nor *Guccio,* nor his greaſy *Nancy,*
Can ever pleaſe an *Engliſh* Fancy.
Our Iſle produces no ſuch Loobies,
Nor any Wenches with ſuch Bubbies.
So then I'll e'en purſue my Tale,
Begging the Critick not to rail.
Now ſee theſe Younkers how they rummage,
And laughing, ſearch the Father's Baggage.

†† *Was in the Kitchen ſmugling* Nanny.] My Manuſcript has it, *Mentre che* Guccio *ſi ſtava traſtullando con la Nancina & le ſtuzzicava la ſportellina,* &c. Here is another curious Reading, and all who have a Taſte of the Language (our young Gentlemen eſpecially) muſt be delighted with it; but let 'em not reflect upon the Council of *Trent* upon this Occaſion, as if they had alter'd the Text, becauſe it is not to be found in any other Edition, no, not in that by Cavalier *Salviati,* who was a Man of Gallantry. How this has happen'd I can't ſay, but it muſt recommend mine prodigiouſly; but upon a Suppoſition that the Convocation we are ſpeaking of, had made this Alteration, *No Proteſtant* cou'd well blame 'em, for certainly 'twou'd have been inconſiſtent with the Gravity of Divines to ſuffer a Gaiety of this kind to paſs uncaſtigated, notwithſtanding all that may be ſaid for the Delicacy of the Expreſſion, which perhaps is inimitable; here you have the Pompous and the Lovely, that *curioſa Felicitas* in the Diction, which few, if any, of our modern Wits can attain to.

† The Reader perceives that *Guccio* was the Name of our *Nuncio*'s Valet, and here is a tedious diſagreeable Deſcription of him and his Fatty, which I omit, for, as I take it, our Author nodded a little.

A little Box, 'tis hard to tell it,
Involv'd in Silk, lay in a Wallet,
Find it they did, and in an Inſtant,
(Old Nick was ſurely their Aſſiſtant)
Eager they open it, and eſpy
A Feather gaudy to the Eye.
It had a Parrot's Tail adorn'd,
That in its Pride the Rainbow ſcorn'd.
* Is this, they cry, the Angel's Pinion:
O! what a Bite is *Father Onion.*
O'erjoy'd, they ſeize it, and to bam
Cipolla, in the Box they cram
Some Coals that in a Corner lay:
All ſet to rights they ſlip away.
Now it was buzz'd among theſe Bumkins,
Who only Melons knew from Pumkins,
The wond'rous Thing they were to ſee,
And ſo to Church they croud with Glee.
The Man of God being replete
With the good Creature, as 'tis meet,
Had ta'en a Nap, and now prepares
To enter on divine Affairs.

* *Is this, they cry, the Angel's Pinion.*] If the Criticks will be ſo gracious as to admit Pinion as a *Metonimy*, *Synecdoche*, or in any Rhetorical Shape they pleaſe, I ſhall always acknowledge the Indulgence.

The Wallets are by *Guccio* brought
In Order, he ſuſpected nought.
The Bell rings in, away he goes,
Intent with Holy Fraud t' impoſe
Upon theſe ſimple *Certaldeſi*,
Than which there nothing was more eaſy.
Lo! he the Pulpit mounts and bangs,
And with great Fervour thus harangues:
St. *Anthony*, ſo great in Heav'n,
His Favour unto you has giv'n;
Look on your Kine, they are not ſtunted,
And fatter Hogs, ſure, never grunted.
'Tis he defends each Dog and Bitch,
With Man and Woman from the Itch.
This I am ſent to ſignify,
And by my Habit 'tis no Lye:
But to confirm and make appear,
The Matter ſtill more plain and clear,
I'll now produce a ſacred Relick.
(A certain Cure of Fits Hifterick.)
This by the Bye ----- but pray be humble,
And proſtrate on your Faces tumble;
Now riſe again, repeat the Creed,
Light up two Torches, as there's Need,

Lift up your Eyes, your Voices raiſe,
And join with me in *Gabriel*'s Praiſe.
He *Legate a Latere* was ſent
To *Mary* with a Compliment,
Which did with Love, divine, inflame
The ever bleſſed glorious Dame:
For in this Box I have a Feather,
Pull'd from one Wing of his, but whether
From Right or Left, I am not ſure,
And lying I cou'd ne'er endure.
Here we'll admire his ſteady Face;
The Box he opens with a Grace.
No Feather ----- only Coals he ſees;
Bleſs me! (he mutters) how come theſe!
However, without Bluſh or Pauſe,
The ready Trickſter boldly draws
Himſelf out of a Scrape that might
Confound an over-modeſt Wight,
The Box he ſhuts, and with a Mien
So ſanctify'd and ſo ſerene,
Says he, The Ways of Providence
Are not perceiv'd by Human Senſe,
They often are perplex'd in Mazes,
Which Man, no more than Beaſts that grazes,

Can

Can e'er find out, tho' I can prove, * * *
That Things are wiſely rul'd above. * * *
Attend good People, hear this Truth, * *
I've travel'd from my early Youth; * * *
So far I've been towards the Eaſt, * * *
The Sun I've ſeen when hardly dreſt, * * *
And follow'd him, where in the Lap * * *
Of *Thetis* he lies down to nap. * * *
To bragging I was ne'er inclin'd; * * *
With *Preſtor John*, 'tis true, I din'd, * * *
And did confeſs (it's ſome Years ſince) * * *
That mighty Abyſſinean Prince; * * *
I paſs'd a Country, wide indeed!
It makes my very Heart to bleed,
To think the People are all Lyars,
And in great Numbers Prieſts and Fryars:
But not to keep you on the Tenters
With any more of theſe Adventures,
I now will tell you what will fit ye,
I viſited the Holy City;
The Patriarch and I were Cronies,
Juſt like two Brothers of our *Tony*'s.

* * * * * * *
* * * * * * *

* * * \

† A Seraph's *Ciuffo*, with Surprize
And Pleaſure, alſo ſtruck my Eyes:
And of the Word I view'd a Rib,
With *Cath'rine* of *Sienna*'s Bib.
How was I dazzled with a Ray
Of that bright Star that led the Way
Unto the Magi, who ador'd,
In Stable vile, our Heav'nly Lord.
* Of *Michael*'s Sweat there was a Vial,
When of his Strength he made a Trial,
And fought ſo bravely with the Devil,
The Lord defend us all from Evil!
Tho' none of us were at his bur'ing,
Yet he was dead as any Herring,
When Jesus call'd him from the Grave,
To manifeſt his Pow'r to ſave:

† *A Seraph's* Ciuffo *with Surprize.*] Here I have been in a great Dilemma; the Impatience of the Town for this ſame Specimen of mine, has hurry'd me ſo much, that I have not had time to conſult the *Connoiſſeurs* about *Ciuffo*. It was once in my Head to call it a *Toupet*, *a Queiie*, or ſomething of that kind, and very probably 'twou'd hit all the pretty Fellows, but I conſider'd again, that the more Mature in Years and Letters wou'd exclaim terribly, as ſomething ſo ſhocking in Metaphyſicks, ſo repugnant to all Orthodox Ideas of Intellectual Beings; and who knows, they might damn me, my Specimen and my Manuſcript, all together, and that wou'd be a ſad Story indeed; and therefore I choſe to leave *Ciuffo* to the Publick to pleaſe themſelves.

* *Of* Michael's *Sweat there was a Vial.*] A late Traveller tells us of a Vial of this Archangel's Sweat that is depoſited in the Vatican for the Uſe of the Popes, their Nephews and Favourites, as a wond'rous Sudorifick; and the ſame anonymous Author wou'd likewiſe perſuade us, that Cardinal *Coſcia* had the Benefit of an Unction in the laſt Pontificate; for my Part I doubt the Truth of all this, believe it who will,

——Credat Judæus Apello,
Non Ego,——

Of *Lazarus* I ſpeak, his Jaw
Shall cloſe th' Account of what I ſaw.

I own I was in ſome Confuſion,
To make amends for this Profuſion,
And as a Sign of Gratitude,
The genuine Manuſcripts of *Jude*,
And of the Song of *Solomon*,
Which the good Man did doat upon,
I gave him, but he far out-ſtripp'd me,
When he ſo gen'rouſly tipp'd me
Relicks that are beyond all Price;
Among 'em is one of the Dice
Which did decide the great Conteſt,
Who was to have our Saviour's Veſt.
Methinks it tinkles in my Ear,
I wiſh to God I had it here,
A Vial fill'd with Sound o'th' Bells,
(Don't fancy theſe are Bagatells)
That did in the firſt Temple chime,
And have been melted a long time.
Of *Gabriel*'s Feather I have ſpoken,
As of our Love a tender Token.
Some of the Coals I alſo boaſt,
That did the Holy *Laurence* roaſt.

Now here obſerve how Heav'n directs,
And mortal Man in vain reflects;
The Plume, ſo pleaſing to behold,
A Box in Sarſ'net wrapt does hold;
And in another (God ſhrieve my Sins)
As like unto't as are two Twins,
The Coals are put, and here I ſee
The Hand of God has guided me,
In taking now the Box of Coals,
As they will edify your Souls,
More than the Feather at this Juncture;
So that I feel not the leaſt Puncture
Of Sorrow; nay, I do rejoyce,
And thank the Lord, with grateful Voice;
Since 'tis a bleſt Miſtake, for after
Two Days, the Feaſt of that great Martyr
Comes on, and therefore pray draw near;
With Awe profound theſe Coals revere:
Bow down your Heads in Adoration
Of the Allwiſe Adminiſtration;
For Providence, I can't but ſay,
Has greatly ſhewn itſelf to day.
Theſe very Coals, I am to tell ye,
By th' Fat that dripped from the Belly

Of ſuff'ring *Laurence*, were extinguiſh'd;
Nor can they ever be diminiſh'd:
Your Mem'ries I won't incumber,
Tho' all their Vertues I can't number:
They certainly preſerve from Fire,
And that we can't too much admire.
Come let me croſs each Mother's Child,
You ne'er by me ſhall be beguil'd.
If in a Twelvemonth you are ſing'd
I'th' Flames of Hell, may I be ting'd.
Then he went on with Elocution,
T' excite a lib'ral Contribution.
Who cou'd contain from laughing loud,
To ſee the ign'rant ſilly Croud,
So eager to be croſs'd, that they,
'Till he came down, wou'd hardly ſtay.
There was not any one Curmudgeon
Who did not now become a Gudgeon.
'Twas like unto St. *Peter*'s Haul,
* For ev'ry Croſs he got a Paul;
And feigning thus to be miſtaken,
He ſav'd moſt cleverly his Bacon.

* It may be neceſſary to inform ſome of my Readers, that a Paul or Giulio is an *Italian* Coin, in Value equal to our Six-pence.

In Chriſtian, as in Pagan, Times we find
Some Prieſts are cunning, and ſome Laymen blind;
And that the Pleaſure, often, is as great
Of being gravely cheated as to cheat.

Now, my dear Reader, you are at the End of my Specimen, I leave you to compare it with the *Giunti*, or any Edition you pleaſe, and from this Novel, notwithſtanding the Chaſms, which can't indeed be too much lamented: I ſay, from this one Novel, imperfect as it is, in Compariſon of the reſt, you may judge of my Manuſcript. How many curious Readings reſtor'd! What a Number of beautiful Paſſages brought to light that were loſt! here will be no need of Puffing away in the Daily Papers and in Coffee-Houſes for Subſcriptions; and tho', as a Tranſlator, I have not quite ſo much Vanity as to ſay, *Jamque opus exegi*, &c. yet, as an Editor, do I promiſe myſelf Immortality with my Brethren, who build their Fame upon other Mens Wit and not their own.

ERRATUM.

In the Preface, after encourage the Editor, *add*, by a liberal Subſcription.